

Last Friday, Erie, Pennsylvania's Villa Maria Victors defeated three-time defending champs, York Catholic, by 56-51, winning the State championship for the first time in school history.

Displaying great team spirit, Villa Maria built a large 18-point lead in the second half before fighting off a late York Catholic charge.

Established in 1892 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, the Villa Maria Academy is a Catholic coeducational secondary school. And for over 115 years, Villa Maria Academy has been a part of the history and tradition of the Erie area, providing educational excellence for area students in preparation for higher education and life pursuits.

The mission of the academy is to empower young people to recognize their uniqueness and talents. The Villa Maria Academy Girls' Basketball Team demonstrated that commitment to excellence last Friday.

Congratulations to the new 2009 Pennsylvania AA State Champions.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

OBAMA TAXES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, one of the worst things that you can do during an economic downturn is to raise taxes. And Speaker PELOSI and the Democrats' budget does exactly that.

The amount of taxes that they anticipate raising in their budget, which we are going to debate next week, is \$1.4 trillion. One point four trillion dollars. And the majority of the burden of this tax increase is on a number of different areas of government. One of those is a \$637 billion tax increase that is going to be borne by small businesses that pay taxes as individuals. Small businesses create about 60 to 80 percent of all the new jobs in America, and these new taxes will be a real wet blanket on job creation and economic growth right in the middle of this recession.

They are also going to tax everybody in this country with the energy tax that they are going to add. The budget proposes to raise taxes by \$646 billion

on consumers of oil, coal and natural gas through a complicated cap-and-tax program that will increase the cost of energy for every American. If you turn on your light switch, if you use gas in your car, if you use gas to heat your home, any kind of energy that you use is going to be taxed. And that is going to amount to, on average, \$3,128 in new taxes on every family in America.

Also under the Speaker's budget, taxes on capital gains and dividends will increase from 15 to 20 percent, increasing taxes on investors by \$338 billion over 10 years. These taxes would directly affect investors and stockholders, including people who have 401(k) programs and pension funds, mostly impacted by the declining stock market, and would further discourage investments during a time when new investments are absolutely essential to jump-start our economy.

They are also going to tax charitable giving. They are going to reduce the amount of money that people can deduct from their taxes when they give money to charities. And the charities of this country indicate that is going to cost them at least \$4 to \$9 billion. Now, if the charities in this country can't spend that \$4 to \$9 billion that is given to them by the people of this country, then where are they going to get the money?

Where are the people of this country going to get the money to solve these problems? It is going to probably end up on the back of the taxpayers.

And then we have what is called the "death tax" that they are reinstating. And that says that everybody that has a business, if you want to pass it on to your relatives or your children or grandchildren when you die, there is going to be a tax on it. They are going to tax it and tax it and tax it so that the value of the property or the investment will go down dramatically. And many of the people who would inherit a business so that they can carry on, a farmer, an agricultural family, they will lose it because they can't pay the taxes.

And then they are also going to tax investors, Part 2 investors. The budget would more than double the taxes on carried interest, increasing taxes up from the capital gains rate of 15 percent to the income tax rate of 35 percent.

And all I can say to my colleagues is that the Speaker and the Democrat proposal needs to be re-evaluated. At a time when this economy is suffering, we need to have tax cuts, tax incentives for new job creation, and tax cuts that will allow Americans to take more of their pay home that they can spend on things like refrigerators, cars, food and clothing.

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And what they're going to do is they're going to tax, tax, tax, which is going to be another wet blanket on the economy.

One of the great things, one of the things that really hurt this country

during the Great Depression in the twenties and thirties, was because they raised taxes. That's exactly the wrong thing to do. After Jimmy Carter put us in this trick bag with 14 percent unemployment, or 14 percent inflation and 12 percent unemployment, Ronald Reagan came in and cut taxes across the board, and that increased the productivity in this country. People had more disposable income, and the economy flourished, and we had a period of unprecedented economic growth. That's what we should be doing now, not raising taxes, not adding to the deficit by having these huge budgetary expenditures that are in Speaker PELOSI and the Democrats' plan.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that everybody will listen to what was just said because we don't need tax increases and more spending right now.

WE MUST NOT REPEAT THE MISTAKES OF THE PAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the Obama administration is finalizing its strategy for Afghanistan, and it may announce the results of its war review in the next few days.

President Obama inherited the situation in Afghanistan. He is a leader who prefers diplomacy over war. The United States is organizing an international conference on Afghanistan to reach out to the international community for their help. And there is talk about sending a civilian surge, a surge of experts in such areas as agriculture, reconstruction, rebuilding, and education to Afghanistan, all very positive steps.

Since President Obama, however, has said that he will send at least 17,000 more troops to Afghanistan and possibly more, I am deeply concerned. It will take years, and it will take a lot of blood and treasure to fight a war in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It could bog us down and distract us from our enormous domestic problems right here at home. It could cost us lives. It would cost us economic treasure, and it would cost us, actually it would leave our reputation, international reputation in tatters.

Our 6-year occupation of Iraq, which continues, as I speak, has been a disaster that we absolutely must learn from. Using military force to solve problems that don't have a military solution doesn't work. Foreign occupation doesn't work. According to a new Army report, there are still over 100 attacks per week on our troops in Iraq.

Another occupation, Madam Speaker, halfway around the world, raises serious questions that Congress needs an answer to. So last month, I joined my colleagues, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE and Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, and since we wrote a particular letter to the President and sent it, 10